



Commonwealth of Kentucky Labor Cabinet

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Firestone Industrial Products in Williamsburg Earns SHARP Status for Excellence in Safety

Southern Kentucky manufacturing facility celebrates safety award, 25th anniversary

WILLIAMSBURG, Ky. (Sept. 9, 2014) – Officials from the Kentucky Labor Cabinet today presented Firestone Industrial Products a plaque and a flag signifying the company's certification under the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP). The ceremony took place in conjunction with a celebration of the facility's 25 years in Williamsburg.

Secretary Larry L. Roberts praised the company's dedication to safety and thanked them for being a valuable member of the Williamsburg community for 25 years.

"The SHARP designation underscores a commitment to safety that Firestone Industrial Products embodies in Williamsburg," said Secretary Roberts. "This is a global company, and to keep a facility for a quarter of a century in one area is a real testament to the local workforce, but this also shows how the company cares about its workers."

Firestone Industrial Products has approximately 350 employees in its manufacturing facility in Williamsburg, where it produces air springs and related products for commercial trucks and trailers, other vehicles, agricultural equipment, rail and industrial applications. The company also has quality-certified manufacturing/assembly plants and technical centers in North America, Latin America, Europe and Asia.

“It is an honor to qualify for this program and a testament to the culture of safety and health that has been created by our teammates and leadership at the Williamsburg facility, and across all of Firestone Industrial Products,” said John Vincent, president of Firestone Industrial Products. “Safety is ingrained across our organization. It is a core value from which we all operate, from our most senior leadership to the people who work in all of our manufacturing facilities. I am happy to congratulate everyone who contributed to achieving this distinguished recognition.”

Founded in the 1930s in Indiana, Firestone Industrial Products is now a division of Bridgestone Americas, and has grown into a global company with sales, manufacturing, warehousing and distribution operations worldwide. Firestone has designed and built more air springs for more applications than any other air spring company in the world, and is the world’s leading air spring supplier.

Of the approximately 2,000 eligible facilities in Kentucky, Firestone is one of only 21 total active facilities certified for SHARP designation. To qualify for SHARP, Firestone had to undergo a comprehensive evaluation and series of audits, correct any identified hazards, demonstrate that effective safety and health programs are in place, and maintain injury rates below the national average for its industry for the last three years.

The Williamsburg facility has an average recordable injury incident rate of 3.3 per 100 full-time employees during the past three years, which is 43 percent lower than the national industry average of approximately 5.8. Those totals include total recordable cases of all non-fatal injuries and illnesses. Recordable cases involve all work-related injuries and illnesses that result in days away from work, restricted work or transfer to another job, loss of consciousness or medical treatment beyond first aid.

The U.S. Department of Labor designed SHARP to encourage and recognize excellence in occupational safety and health among employers and create a proactive partnership with its Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Although companies must meet federal standards for the program, the Kentucky Labor Cabinet presents the award, as Kentucky has operated its own federally approved Occupational Safety and Health program (KYOSH) for more than 40 years.

Companies must have a safety and health program that engages all employees in finding and correcting existing or possible future hazards. SHARP’s certification is good for two years, and then the company is eligible for renewal. A company is exempted from scheduled KYOSH compliance inspections during the certification period, but works with KYOSH to continue striving to improve its safety program.

There are multiple benefits of SHARP designation, including protecting employees by removing safety and health hazards, creating a safety culture, building a reputation as a safe workplace, and saving money by lowering worker compensation insurance premiums, reduction in turnover and increased productivity due to fewer days away from work.

Participation in SHARP does not eliminate the responsibilities of owners or rights of workers under the Occupational Safety and Health Act. The following types of incidents can trigger an enforcement inspection at SHARP sites: a formal complaint, fatality, imminent danger situation and any other significant incident.

For more on the SHARP program, click [here](#).

For details on Firestone Industrial Products, visit www.firestoneip.com

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